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THE MEDALLIC COLLECTOR'S NEWSLETTER

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Ancient Coins Unearthed In Turkey

For nearly ten years, archaeological work being done in Turkey under the auspices of the National Geographic Society has aroused interest among the world's coin collectors. In addition to finding many valuable artifacts, the excavations have uncovered a large cache of coins that date back as far as 390 A.D.

The site of this rich lode of antiquities is the ancient city of Aphrodisias, near the modern village of Geyre, Turkey. Work began on the dig in 1961, under the direction of Dr. Kenan T. Erin. The hoard of more than 6500 coins is being studied and catalogued by Professor Fredrick M. Lauritsen of Eastern Washington State College in Cheney, Washington. The professor's special field is ancient history.

Prof. Lauritsen believes the coins were the property of a merchant—the site of excavations was once part of a trade route from the Middle East to Europe—as long ago as 390 A.D. He conjectures that earthquakes buried the cache, thus preventing the merchant from recovering them.

This dig contains much more than coins, of course. There are hundreds of pieces of pottery, statuary, ruins of a temple to Aphrodite, an *odeum* (music hall), and a stadium built to seat 30,000 observers.

The archaeological staff consists of only twelve scientists, but they are assisted by many villagers, and by college students and professors who come during the summer months.

When Lauritsen wearies of the exacting work of identifying the excavated hoard, he finds a change of pace in working on coins brought to him by local townspeople. Some of these seem to have come from the same or a similar hoard, and a few date back to 350 A.D.

It is doubtful that coin collectors will ever have a chance to buy these rare coins, but once the excavtion is complete they will certainly be put on display.

EVERYBODY MAKES MISTAKES!

One of the first commemorative medals sanctioned by Congress was unanimously voted to Commodore John Paul Jones on October 16, 1787 to honor his victory over England's *Serapis* on September 23, 1779—one of the major exploits of the American Navy.

President Jefferson commissioned the design of this medal to French artist, Augustin Dupré. Perhaps because another artist had started designs previously (by Jones's own commission), or perhaps because Jones was not in Paris at the time, Dupré put the battle of Flamborough Hill off the shore of Scotland rather than England, and he failed to anchor the *Serapis*.

Nevertheless, the gold medal was struck and presented to Jones, with numerous copies made in silver, copper and Wedgwood porcelain. The original gold medal disappeared after Jones's death, but the matrix—which had been preserved in Paris—was used to make a fresh strike in gold which is now in the chapel crypt at Annapolis near Jones's body.

Artist Helps Collector Turn White Elephants Into Silver "Pachydimes"

In early 1960's many coin collectors made the mistake of investing in large quantities of rolls of silver Roosevelt dimes, which turned out to be "white elephants" in that they didn't increase in value as had been anticipated. Their worth is only equal to the silver of which they're made.

John Wojcik of Dayton, Ohio, was stuck with such a "worthless" stockpile. But the numismatist, who is also a great fancier of elephants (he owns a collection of more than 150 models and likenesses of the huge mammal—decided to turn his white elephants into silver ones.

With the help of Ed Hill, an artist and sculptor of Xenia, Ohio, the dimes were melted down and cast into ten 3-inch high elephants, modeled after the famous "Jumbo" statue at the Natural History Museum of Chicago. Fourteen pounds of dimes were used, and each little elephant weighs a little over one pound. Now other coin collectors, having heard about the unique "pachydimes," are commissioning Mr. Hill for similar sculptures and jewelry incorporating coins and medallions.

Coin Shows and Exhibits

At the end of March, the 17th annual Metropolitan New York Numismatic Convention was held at the Barbizon Plaza Hotel. The hotel's entire mezzanine exhibit area and theater were used for bourses, displays, and an exciting three-session auction held by Stacks Coin Dealers.

The displays were beautifully mounted, many on velvet cloths in glass cases, with informative placards adjacent to each. Of special beauty were the displays of medallic art. This convention, which is open to the public each year, is one of the best of its kind in the East.

If you live in the area, and do not yet belong to a numismatic society, The Boulevard Coin Club of Brooklyn is worth investigating. It meets year round on the first Friday of every month in the Contello Towers, 1935 Shore Parkway, Brooklyn, N.Y., at 7:30 PM. If you live in another part of the country, watch the society or hobby pages of your local newspaper for announcements of numismatic meetings. Nearly all such clubs welcome guests—and you'll find new friends who share your interests and who have sound advice to offer on investments. (And—take along your copy of **The Medallic Investor's Newsletter** to share *your* knowledge with them!)

Two places you'd think unlikely to have coin exhibits are Lincoln Center's Philharmonic Hall and the Hayden Planetarium, both of New York City. Their gift shops are now offering special medallions related to events they are celebrating.

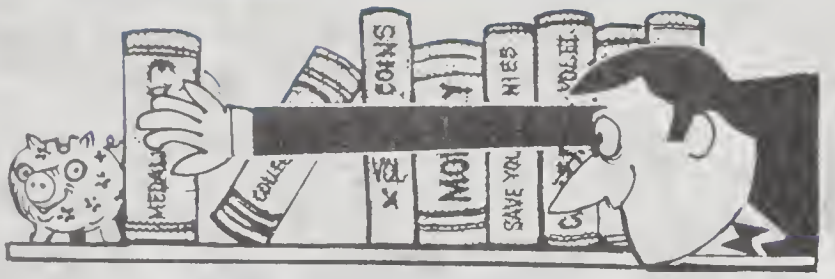
Lincoln Center is commemorating the 10th anniversary of Philharmonic Hall with a large 2 3/4 inch medal in bronze or silver. The obverse shows the famous "Reclining Figure" sculpture by Henry Moore

which adorns the reflecting pool in the North Plaza. The reverse has a relief depiction of Philharmonic Hall, the Metropolitan Opera House, and the New York State Theatre.

The Hayden Planetarium is celebrating for the whole year of 1973 the 500th anniversary of the birth of Nicholas Copernicus, one of the founders of astronomy. To commemorate this occasion, the Planetarium has bronze medallions in its gift shop and special exhibits in the outer halls of the theater.

Both gift shops, and also the one at the Museum of Natural History (next door to the Planetarium), offer other coins, medallions and jewelry fashioned from coins of the past.

The Medallic Collector's Book Shelf



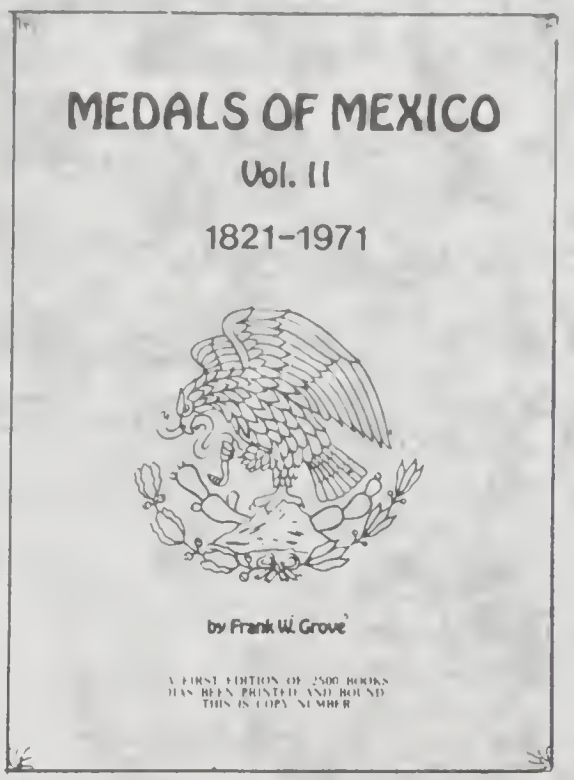
Reviews of Current Books, Lists of Reference Books

James A. Brown of 97 Wilson Ave., Newark N.J. 07105, will send you free of charge a 3-page listing of numismatic reference books which he claims are a must for any serious collector, be he wealthy or a "pennyboarder."

For a description of more than 7500 coins from all over the world, the new **World Coin Catalog** (by Gunter Schon, 911 pp.; Simon & Schuster, NYC. $10) is a valuable reference source for collectors. The coins covered date from 1900 to 1972, and the book contains 2,256 photos.

An inexpensive and handy reference is a small paper-back of 192 pages crammed with facts, called **Guide to Coin Collecting for Fun and Profit,** by Brad Mills. Just $1.00, it's published by HC Publishers, 250 Fifth Ave, NYC 10001.

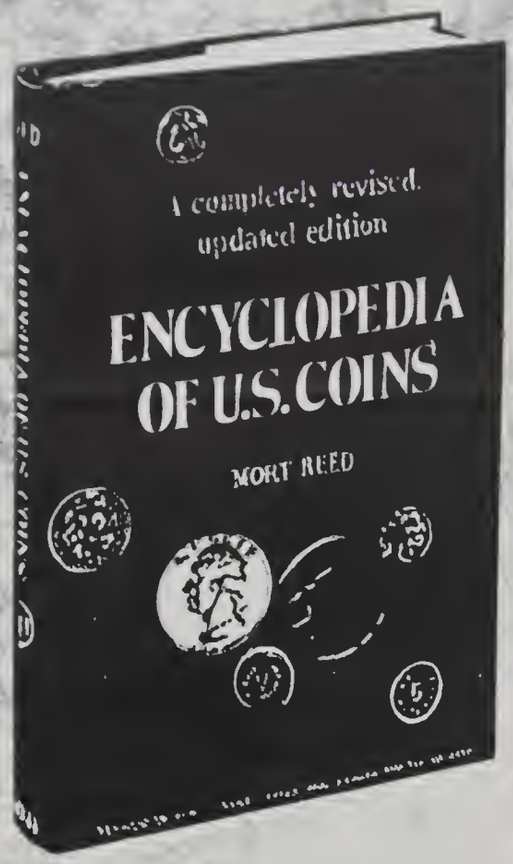
For some really handsome additions to your numismatic library we can recommend the following: **Medallic Portraits of Washington,** by W. S. Baker; **Early Coins of America,** by S. S. Crosby; and **Early Paper Money of America,** by Newman. These range in price from $15 to $25, and are available pre-paid from Richard Picker, P.O. Box 123, Albertson, NY 11507. (The Picker company also stocks a fine array of rare Colonial coins, and a few medallions.)



A truly monumental work on Mexican numismatics by researcher F. W. Grove, featuring medals over the last 150-year period, has just come off the press. Entitled **Medals of Mexico,** Volume II, it sells for $15 and is distributed by the coin dealers "Almanzar's," of San Antonio, Texas, 78205. (Volume I is still available, at $12.50, and covers the Medals of Spanish Kings.) The current gold-embossed volume has nearly 1500 illustrations and will be an asset to any collector's library.

Interest in numismatics is increasing so rapidly these days that you can find a book on the coins of almost any country, any year. One of the more interesting ones on the market now is **Cast Coinage of Korea,** by Edgar J. Mandel. A 160-page hard bound book, it contains a glossary of Korean,

Chinese and English numismatic terms, and has beautiful illustrations of the major types of Korean coins executed in the classic Oriental style. This one is a bargain for only $7.50, from Western Publishing Co., Racine, Wisconsin, 53404.



A reference work called by the Chicago **Sun-Times** "A must for every numismatist" is the new, completely revised and updated **Encyclopedia of U.S. Coins** by Mort Reed. A big feature of this tome is its section on how to spot counterfeit coins. Published by Presidential Art, Inc., Vandalia, Ohio 45377. $10. 320 pp.

Cook Islands Mints
New Commemorative Coins

Queen Elizbeth II continues to be honored with beautiful coins during this year of her silver wedding anniversary. Shown here is the Cook Islands cupronickel one dollar with a bust of the Queen on the obverse, and the likeness of a rare Polynesian god named "Tangaroa" on the reverse. Designer James

Berry created the art for the coin, and for two smaller coins showing the bust of the Queen on the obverse and a native fish (50¢ piece) and a bird in flight (20¢ piece) on the reverses. In addition to these, Berry created four other smaller coins of lesser denominations (10¢, 5¢, 2¢ and 1¢) which bear equally attractive designs on the reverses, and the same bust of the Queen on the obverses. These are breadfruit & leaves, native flower, pineapples, and leaf designs. The seven coin set is now on sale in London.

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